



Brief Strategic Family Therapy (BSFT)

Description:

Brief Strategic Family Therapy (BSFT) is a short term, problem-focused therapeutic treatment intervention designed for children and adolescents aged 6-17 years old and their families.

BSFT focuses on problem behavior by eliminating or reducing illicit drug use. Family involvement is a key piece of this treatment. It includes establishing a viable and effective therapeutic system that is inclusive of the whole family. The therapist works with the family to identify interactional patterns that give rise to and/or maintain problematic youth behavior. After these patterns are identified, the therapist helps the family change these patterns to encourage positive family interactions.

BSFT addresses family behavior, affect, and cognitions that work to restructure interactions and change systems. BSFT strategies and treatment plans are designed specifically for each family and are based on a structured diagnostic schema. Strategies include:

Treatment Logistics:

- Reframing
- Shifting alliances
- Building conflict resolution skills
- Parental empowerment
- Reversals
- Giving and micromanaging behavioral tasks

Appropriate Age Range: 6-17

Participants: Children/adolescents and their families

of Sessions: 12-16 weekly sessions; 60-90 minutes.

Location: Clinic or Home-based

Evidence-Base:

Refer to Appendix B for a matrix that lists the organizations that have approved BSFT as an EBP or go to <http://www.uncg.edu/csr/asatp/ebpmatrix.pdf> to view it online. Children and adolescents treated with BSFT show:

Other outcomes include:

- Decreases in substance abuse
- Reductions in negative attitudes/behaviors
- Improvements in positive attitudes/behaviors
- Reduction in association with anti-social peers
- Improvements in family functioning

Reference to Treatment Manual:

- Retained over 75% of families in the program
- Increased family participation in therapy (92% of referred/non-mandated families)
- Improved youth self-concept and self-control
- Improved family communication, conflict resolution, and problem-solving skills
- Increased parental involvement and develops more positive effective parenting
- More effective parental management of child's behavior
- Improved family cohesiveness, collaboration, and child bonding to the family

Szapocznik, J., Hervis, O., Schwartz, S. (2003). *Therapy manuals for drug addiction. Brief strategic family therapy for adolescent drug use.* (NIH Publication No. 03-4751). Washington DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <http://www.nida.nih.gov/pdf/Manual5.pdf>

Additional References:

SAMHSA. "Brief Strategic Family Therapy." <http://www.modelprograms.samhsa.gov/pdfs/model/Bsft.pdf>

Family Therapy Training Institute of Miami: <http://www.brief-strategic-family-therapy.com/bsft>

Helping America's Youth: <http://guide.helpingamericasyouth.gov/programdetail.cfm?id=305>



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